

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date: May 11, 2021 8:00 AM

Printed on: May 11, 2021 10:52 AM

COMMENTS FOR: SB 1079

Tina Freeman

Self/retired District Clerk

Lockhart, TX

I support this bill, especially sections regarding intake and the source of the report and investigations. I would hope that at some point, intake will consider the SOURCE of the call and determine priority of the call based on both caller and allegation before separating children from their parents.

Sandragrace Martinez

Mental Wellness Connections, INC

Hollywood Park, TX

Would like for an amendment to be considered. This is an outstanding piece of legislation and would like to suggest adding Child Welfare Board's to also be part of accessing crucial data to meet the needs of the DFPS involved kiddo's, families, kin, and fictive kin. As a nonprofit it is difficult to obtain proper resources for DFPS cases when the CWB in Bexar County has issues obtaining information from DFPS leadership or administration. Data is crucial to preparedness in meeting the essential needs of cases in all stages of DFPS Units.

Respectfully,

Sandragrace Martinez, President/Director

Mental Wellness Connections, INC 501c3

Marcie Trevino Ripper

Bexar County Child Welfare Board

San Antonio, TX

Please add the Child Welfare Board amendment to this bill. Now more than ever we need local government involvement in our child welfare systems. Prior state leaders created Child Welfare Boards for that very reason, to all for true community based care and advocacy for our most vulnerable, children who have experienced abuse and/or neglect.

CWBs are made up of volunteers and advocates on the ground. We can also be the local unbiased policy experts if we are empowered to do so. Transparency and access to data should not be a barrier CWBs face. We support the department in every way possible. The Family Code actually states we are a part of the department, yet we are not entitled to readily accessible data to analyze and study for ourselves. We are wrongly treated with skepticism and distrust. Our agenda is the safety and wellbeing of local children and families. Nothing more, nothing less. We do not have contracts to win or worry about. We just have our community's children in our hands.

Please give CWBs the tools and access we need to get the job done in our local communities. Kids first.

Sandragrace Martinez

Bexar County Child Welfare Board

Hollywood Park, TX

To the Honorable Members of House of Representatives Human Services Committee Member's,

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Respectfully,

Ms. Sandragrace Martinez, MA, MFT, LPC, LCDC-I
Bexar County Child Welfare Board Executive Member
